

MONTANA CROP PROGRESS



United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
MONTANA FIELD OFFICE
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 Cooperating with the Montana Department of Agriculture



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CROP PROGRESS AND CONDITION MONTH OF MARCH 2017

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY: The month of March saw a return to milder, spring-like conditions with a few short lived cold spells, according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. High temperatures ranged from the lower 50s to the lower 80s and low temperatures ranged from -11 degrees in Brockway and Circle to the lower 20s. Precipitation was present across the State but in variable amounts, with the highest recorded this month in Heron with 5.21 inches of moisture. Other reporting stations recorded between 0.03 to 3.97 inches of moisture. Topsoil moisture conditions were 93 percent adequate to surplus which is above of last year's 47 percent. Subsoil moisture conditions are 87 percent adequate to surplus, well above last year's 36 percent. Winter wheat began breaking dormancy as temperatures warmed and snow cover dissipated. The State's snow coverage fell due to warm weather and high winds and is 13 percent good to excellent which is still above the coverage at this time last year when snow coverage was 12 percent good to excellent. Winter wheat condition is rated 62 percent good to excellent, compared with 49 percent last year. Livestock grazing is 94 percent open to difficult compared to 81 percent at the same time last year. Livestock producers are providing supplemental feed as they wait for pastures to start greening with 91 percent of cattle and 92 percent of sheep being fed. Livestock birthing continues with 13 percent of calving and 9 percent of lambing complete so far.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current report (percent)	Previous report (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Winter wheat				
Breaking dormancy.....	8	NA	NA	NA
Cattle and calves				
Calving completed.....	13	8	13	NA
Receiving supplemental feed.....	91	99	96	NA
Sheep and lambs				
Lambing completed.....	9	6	11	NA
Receiving supplemental feed.....	92	100	95	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

SOIL MOISTURE CONDITION

Commodity	Current report (percent)	Previous report (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Topsoil moisture				
Very short.....	1	1	25	NA
Short.....	6	14	28	NA
Adequate.....	82	82	47	NA
Surplus.....	11	3	--	NA
Subsoil moisture				
Very short.....	4	2	23	NA
Short.....	9	16	41	NA
Adequate.....	78	77	36	NA
Surplus.....	9	5	--	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

CROP, LIVESTOCK, PASTURE AND RANGE CONDITION

	Current report (percent)	Previous report (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Grazing Accessibility				
Open.....	77	59	72	NA
Difficult.....	17	20	9	NA
Closed.....	6	21	19	NA
Winter Wheat				
Very poor.....	1	1	1	NA
Poor.....	6	6	4	NA
Fair.....	31	42	46	NA
Good.....	57	45	46	NA
Excellent.....	5	6	3	NA
Winter Wheat – Wind Damage				
None.....	71	67	77	NA
Light.....	22	24	14	NA
Moderate.....	6	8	8	NA
Heavy.....	1	1	1	NA
Winter Wheat – Freeze & Drought Damage				
None.....	65	65	75	NA
Light.....	23	25	16	NA
Moderate.....	9	8	8	NA
Heavy.....	3	2	1	NA
Winter Wheat – Protectiveness of Snow Cover				
Very Poor.....	42	9	52	NA
Poor.....	15	36	20	NA
Fair.....	30	29	16	NA
Good.....	12	14	4	NA
Excellent.....	1	12	8	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

Montana’s weather data can be accessed at the following:

http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Montana/Publications/Crop_Progress_&_Condition/2017/MT_Weather_03262017.pdf